

APPLICANT(S): Sergey POPOV
SERIAL NO.: 10/579,534
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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Kindly amend the claims as follows:

1 - 66 (cancelled)

67. (New) A catheter introducer, comprising:

- a catheter having a catheter hub and an axial through channel with a proximal end portion made as a female luer lock portion;

- a needle assembly including

- a needle with a distal sharp point, which extends through said catheter channel, and

- a safety means having a protector for protecting said needle distal sharp point after introducing said catheter into a blood vessel,

- wherein said needle assembly is in a protected position when said needle is protected by said protector, wherein in said protected position said needle assembly has a distal end and a proximal end;

- a catheter cap having a tapered male luer member with a tapered end for occluding a proximal opening of said catheter after the transposition of said needle to said protected position, said catheter cap being detachably mounted on said needle assembly; and

- mounting means for detachable mounting of said catheter cap on said needle assembly,

- wherein said mounting means includes stabilizing means that prevents rotation of said tapered male luer member with respect to said needle assembly when mounting said catheter cap onto said catheter, and

- wherein when said needle assembly is in said protected position said catheter cap is positioned at either of said ends of said needle assembly, and said tapered end of said tapered male luer member is directed proximally when said catheter cap is positioned at said proximal end of said needle assembly and distally when said catheter cap is positioned at said distal end of said needle assembly.

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68. (New) The catheter introducer of claim 67, wherein said mounting means has first and second mounting elements one of which is disposed on said needle assembly and the other on said catheter cap, wherein said stabilizing means is made as at least one slot and at least one projection, one of which slot and projection is located on said first mounting element and the other of which slot and projection is located on said second mounting element wherein said projection slidably enters said slot.

69. (New) The catheter introducer of claim 68, wherein said catheter cap is detachably retained on said needle assembly by friction between said first and second mounting elements.

70. (New) The catheter introducer of claim 67 and further including shielding means preventing said tapered luer member from accidental contact with an operator, wherein said shielding means is made as a shielding wall enclosing said tapered male luer member and protruding beyond said tapered end.

71. (New) The catheter introducer of claim 67, wherein said catheter cap is disposed on said protector.

72. (New) The catheter introducer of claim 67, wherein said needle assembly includes a hub ,and wherein said catheter cap is disposed on said hub.

73. (New) The catheter introducer of claim 70, wherein one of said mounting elements is disposed on said needle assembly and forms a receptacle in which said catheter cap is housed and wherein said receptacle acts as said shielding means.

74. (New) The catheter introducer of claim 67, wherein said catheter cap is provided with a thread for fixing said catheter cap onto said catheter.